

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 01659 01 OF 02 111235Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 HA-05 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00
/110 W

-----080737 111407Z /47

R 110845Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8009
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
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PAGE 02 ADDIS 01659 01 OF 02 111235Z

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 1659

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SWEL, MOPS, ET
SUBJ: DIPLOMATS PERMITTED TO VIEW WAR DAMAGE IN OGADEN

SUMMARY: REPRESENTATIVE GROUP OF DIPLOMATS AND INTER-

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES HAVE RETURNED FROM THREE-DAY TRIP TO WAR-RAVAGED AREAS OF OGADEN REGION OF ETHIOPIA. TRIP HAS SERVED TO GENERATE STRONG SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN EFFORT TO ASSIST PEOPLE AND REGION. RETURNEES SAW NO EVIDENCE OF ETHIOPIAN REPRISALS AGAINST ETHNIC SOMALI RESIDENTS, MANY OF WHOM WERE OBSERVED RETURNING TO THEIR HOMES. TRIP HAS PROBABLY DISPELLED COMPLETELY ANY LINGERING SENTIMENT FAVORING STATIONING OF INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS IN OGADEN AND SHOULD REDOUND TO ETHIOPIA'S CREDIT. END SUMMARY.

1. FIRST ETHIOPIAN GOVT-SPONSORED (PMGSE) TOUR OF OGADEN WAR REGION FOR SOME 30 RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC CHIEFS OF MISSION AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES VISITED DIRE DAWA, GODE, KEBRE DAHAR, DEGAHABUR, JIJIGA, AND FEDIS APRIL 5-7. OF INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES REPRESENTED, MOST WERE AFRICAN AND OTHER THIRD WORLD, TOGETHER WITH SWITZERLAND, POLAND, AND YUGOSLAVIA. NO BIG POWERS WERE INCLUDED. GUESTS WERE ESCORTED PERSONALLY BY MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND OF LABOR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, AS WELL AS BY RELIEF AND REHABILITATION COMMISSIONER (RRC) SHIMELIS ADUGNA. THEY RECEIVED EXTENSIVE BRIEFINGS FROM LOCAL MILITARY COMMANDERS AND ADMINISTRATOR FOR HARARGHE REGION ON MILITARY CAMPAIGN AND REHABILITATION. OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ADDIS 01659 01 OF 02 111235Z

TION NEEDS OF POPULATION.

2. FIRST HAND INSPECTION OF WAR DAMAGE IN MAJOR TOWNS OBVIOUSLY SERVED BOTH ETHIOPIAN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INTERESTS. DIPLOMATS, ALL OF WHOM WERE INTERVIEWED INDIVIDUALLY BY ETHIOPIAN MEDIA AT AIRPORT ON THEIR RETURN, WERE UNANIMOUS IN THEIR VIEW THAT URGENT AND SUBSTANTIAL RELIEF ASSISTANCE WOULD BE REQUIRED FROM FOREIGN AND INTERNATIONAL DONORS. FROM PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS EMBASSY HAS SINCE HAD WITH VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION PARTICIPANTS, HOWEVER, VIEWS ARE FAR FROM UNANIMOUS AS TO MAGNITUDE OF RELIEF EFFORT REQUIRED. ON RECONSTRUCTION SIDE, DEAN OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS, CAMEROON AMBASSADOR DICKO, IS QUOTED AS LISTING HEAVY DAMAGE TO BUILDINGS, HOSPITALS, BRIDGES, AND UTILITIES. YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR VOJINOVIC EXPRESSED SHOCK TO SEE SO MUCH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY "DELIBERATELY PUT OUT OF USE" BY SOMALI ARMY IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO WITHDRAWAL. UNDP HEAD BERNANDER TOLD PRESS THAT ASSISTANCE NEEDS WERE OBVIOUS, AND VARIOUS UN ORGANIZATIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES WERE IN PRO-

CESS OF DETERMINING HOW TO ORGANIZE THEIR JOINT
EFFORT.

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 01659 02 OF 02 111237Z
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PAGE 02 ADDIS 01659 02 OF 02 111237Z

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 1659

3. SEVERAL ENVOYS, INCLUDING SWISS, INDIAN, LIBYAN, AND UNDP, COMPLETELY DISMISSED SOMALI CHARGES THAT ETHIOPIAN FORCES HAVE PROCTICED GENOCIDE AGAINST OGADENI POPULATION. AMBASSADOR DICKO NOTED HELPFUL ROLE OF MILITARY AND RRC IN LOOKING AFTER DISPLACED PERSONS AND ENABLING THEM TO RESUME LIFE IN THEIR VILLAGES. IN TOWNS VISITED, NEARLY EIGHTY PER CENT OF POPULATION HAD RETURNED TO THEIR HOMES.

4. PMGSE DERIVED SEVERAL ADDITIONAL POLITICAL BENEFITS FROM INDIVIDUAL PRESS STATEMENTS OF RETURNING DIPLOMATS. YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR FLATLY STATED THAT IN LIGHT OF DESTRUCTION WITNESSED, SOMALI HAS CLEAR OBLIGATION TO PAY WAR REPARATIONS FOR LOSS OF BOTH HUMAN LIVES AND PROPERTY. HE CITED MASS CIVILIAN GRAVE IN QUARRY AT KEBRI DAHAR, WHERE GROUP PAID TRIBUTE TO VICTIMS OF SOMALI ATROCITY. KENYAN COUNSELOR CITED SOPHISTICATED CAPTURED WEAPONRY AS EVIDENCE THAT WESTERN SOMALI LIBERATION FRONT IS FIGMENT OF IMAGINATION AND ALSO SUPPORTED ETHIOPIAN DEMAND FOR WAR REPARATIONS.

5. NEWSPAPERS INDICATE THAT MORE DIPLOMATIC TRIPS WILL BE ORGANIZED IN FUTURE, BUT PARTICIPANTS ON THIS ONE HAVE IMPRESSION THEIRS WAS ONE TIME VENTURE. BY FLUKE, WESTERN COUNTRIES WERE NOT REPRESENTED ON TRIP. DUTCH AMBASSADOR, WHO WAS ORIGINALLY INVITED, HESITATED AT FIRST ABOUT ACCEPTING BECAUSE OF CONFLICTING SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT. BY TIME HE MADE UP HIS MIND TO GO, PMGSE WAS MIFFED AND HAD DROPPED HIS NAME FROM LIST. AMBASSADOR'S STOCK IS ACCORDINGLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ADDIS 01659 02 OF 02 111237Z

NOT VERY HIGH AMONG HIS EC AND NATO COLLEAGUES. OAU ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY GENERAL WILLIAM ETEKI MBOUMOUA ALSO DECLINED HIS INVITATION, ON THE DUBIOUS GROUNDS THAT HE SHOULD NOT PERSONALLY VISIT A REGION THAT WAS SUBJECT OF FUNDAMENTAL DISPUTE BETWEEN TWO OAU MEMBER STATES. HIS DECISION HAS IRRITATED PMGSE AT TIME WHEN THEIR WORKING RELATIONSHIP IS ALREADY NOT THE BEST. MATHERON

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Message Attributes

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TAGS: SWEL, MOPS, ET
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